Back to Before by bramcrackers

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Summary: It was six months since Eleven had defeated the Demogoran and Will was found. But just as everyone thinks their involvement in the supernatural world is done, things start to get stranger again.

1. Preface

There was nothing but complete chaos and danger surrounding. Eleven felt almost completely drained as she laid resting on one of the lab tables in the Hawkins Middle School science classroom. The Demogorgan growled angrily as Lucas launched rocks at the ferocious creature.

"Kill it!" Dustin yelled over and over. He and Mike handed more and more rocks to Lucas, though it wasn't having much impact.

"It's not working!" He screamed to his friends as he continued firing at the monster.

"Hit him again!" Mike shrieked as the Demogorgan slowly stepped toward the boys, snarling loudly.

Lucas took one last shot at it with his wrist-rocket, hitting the monster directly in what was supposed to be its face. It stumbled backwards suddenly, hitting the chalk board with a loud thud. The boys stared in shock as Eleven came out from behind them, a deadly look in her eye.

She slowly walked across the classroom, her face completely pale with blood dripping from her nose, as she made her way to the chalkboard.

"Eleven, stop!" Mike tried to reach out to her and pull her back with them, but she telekinetically slammed him to the opposite end of the classroom, letting him hit his head on one of the drawers.

Could she do this? She'd spent her entire life isolated and abused by the men who experimented on her. And throughout that entire week she'd spent with Mike, Lucas, and Dustin, they've shown her what it was like to be truly cared about and to have people you can depend on.

"A friend is someone that you'd do anything for." Mike's voice rang in her head as she gazed back to look at her friends one last time.

"Goodbye, Mike." She told him, knowing she'd never see him again.

Turning back towards the monster, she gazed straight into his eyes, ready to put a stop to this.

"No more." The child lifted her hand towards the Demogorgan, screaming as it slowly began to vanish out of sight.

For a moment, all that could be heard was a loud screeching. Then, the Demogorgan was gone. And so was Eleven.

With a flash, she had been transported out of the classroom and was one hundred percent sure she was dead. Except she wasn't.

"Mike..?" Her frightened voice came out in barely a whisper as she looked around for her friends. But she was completely alone. She could hear the boys yelling her name but it was clear that they couldn't hear her.

There was only one place Eleven could be. A place she'd seen many times before. A place she opened the gate to. A place dangerous and toxic and a living version of hell.

She was in the Upside Down.

Authors Note: So i've had this idea in my head for a while and I was really excited to upload this. I have a bunch of chapters outlined already with a basic idea of where I want to go and I can't wait to upload more of it. Be sure to tell me what you think, constructive criticism included. And if you liked this idea follow for more! The next chapter is going to take place six months later I just wanted to start the story with a preface

Disclaimer; I don't own stranger things.

2. Second Chances

Six Months Later

"Something is coming." Mike Wheeler narrated, speaking slowly as the rest of the party stared at him, totally fixated on every word he said. "Something angry, hungry for your blood. It is almost here."

Mike and his friends were all gathered around a table in his basement, completely engrossed in their latest game of Dungeons & Dragons. It had been almost six months since the supernatural events had occurred with Will going missing and the loss of their telekinetic new friend. Things had pretty much gone back to normal in the small town of Hawkins, Indiana but there were still some wounds that the boys and everyone else involved still felt.

For example, Eleven. Mike and the boys had tried very hard to contact her, hoping she was still out there somewhere but there was no luck. Every time they tried there was no response that came through. It worried all of them, especially Mike. It upset him that she had done so much to help them during that week that they'd known her and they weren't able to save her in return. While the other boys had accepted that there was no way they could save her, Mike still tried to convince himself that she was somehow okay.

Then there was the slugs. Ever since Will got out of the Upside Down, he had been puking up these disgusting slugs and getting brief flashes of the living hell he spent a week trapped in. Every once in a while, it would start to happen and Will would try as hard as he could to be away from everyone else when it happened. He didn't want his family and friends to know what was going on until he knew. But it was clear whatever was happening was no good.

As the boys continued the campaign, the door creaked open, revealing Karen at the top of the steps.

"Michael!" She called down to her son. The boys groaned at the interruption.

"Mom, we're kinda busy." Mike quickly stood up from the table.

"It's time to put everything away. It's getting late and the boys have to get home." His mother informed him, about to leave and finish cleaning up the kitchen.

"But-"

"No buts." Karen told him in her 'end of discussion' voice as the other three boys began grabbing their coats and getting ready to go.

Mike sighed. There was almost no point in arguing with his mom. As his friends bickered to each other while getting ready to go, his eyes wandered the room, landing on the fort Eleven once slept in.

Even though it had been months since he last saw her, it still hurt to know he was most likely never going see her again. His lips formed a sad smile as he thought about his friend. Mike just wished there was some way to know she was really safe. His thoughts were interrupted as Lucas called his name.

"Hey, bye, man." Lucas called as he headed up the steps.

"Bye, Mike." Dustin repeated as he and Will followed Lucas out of the basement.

"Bye!" Mike glanced up, before shaking off his previous thoughts and climbing up the steps to let his friends out.

Just as the basement was completely empty, a small static came from Mike's supercom. It hummed for a few seconds until a faint voice peered through.

"M- Mike.."

Authors Note: I hope you're enjoying the story so far there's a lot that I'm gonna have happen. Again, i'm always looking to get better at writing so be sure to leave a review and tell me what you think or ways I can improve the story! This came out sort of shorter than I planned but once more things start happening the chapters are gonna get a lot longer. Anyways, thanks for reading!

3. The Eggos in the Woods

"Hey, you leaving, chief?" Cal glanced up at Hopper who was getting ready to leave the station that evening.

"Yeah, your mom's cookin for me tonight." Hopper smirked, teasing as he lit a cigar and blew a puff of smoke before walking out to his station wagon.

Was there still any point in trying? It's been months. This girl was most likely dead by now. The eggos in the box only disappeared every once in a while and it didn't mean Eleven was the one who took them. It easily could've been some wild animal or a hiker who just happened to find the box.

With a sigh, Hopper drove into the woods where he'd driven a bunch of times over the past six months. Getting out of the car, the chief walked over to where a small box was buried and opened it. It looked exactly the same as since the last time he put food in there. Dammit. Hopper dug around in his coat pockets and pulled out a couple of fresh eggos, switching them out with the ones with the box.

Hopper wished there was a way to know for sure if it was Eleven who had been taking the eggos out of the box. He wanted to know she was okay. After all if it weren't for him the Department of Energy would have no idea the kids were at the school and she wouldn't be wherever the hell she was right now. There were definitely some things he could've done differently but hey, he got Joyce her son back. That was his task for the entire week, right? Now it was still his task to find out where Eleven was, if she was even still alive, and to get to her before the bad men did.

Feeling done for the day, Hopper stood up from where he was crouched down by the box and headed back toward his station wagon. But was he saw wasn't what he was expecting.

A black government car was parked right next to his station wagon with two men inside, clearly waiting for him. Hopper paused, remaining calm as one of the government officials stepped out and opened the back door, gesturing for Hopper to get in.

"I think you better come with us." He told him, but Hopper knew the hidden meaning behind the words meant he had no choice. Hesitantly, he got into the car wondering what they needed him for this time. Did they know he'd been trying to contact the girl? Had they found her? If they actually thought for one second that he would actually help them track her down then they had obviously lost their damn minds.

About twenty minutes later, they arrived at Hawkins Lab and the men led Hopper into a room where Dr. Brenner stood waiting. As he took a glance around, Hopper got a sense of déjà vu. For this was the same room where they had Joyce in when they broke into the lab to try to get inside the portal. Hopper glared, wanting to get this over with. "What do you want?" He asked, sitting down in one of the chairs by the table.

"Eleven." The Doctor stated simply in his usual calm matter. "We know you've been trying to reach her."

Hopper simply continued to stare, waiting for him to get to the point. They couldn't have dragged him here at ten o'clock at night just for that. They must know something.

"You know the child is no one else's responsibility but ours." Brenner continued. "There is no need for you to continue searching for her. We can handle it from here."

The chief looked at him in disbelief. Did he seriously drag him down here this late just to tell him that? They probably did figure something out. No wonder Brenner was determined for him to back off. "Wow, if you needed to tell me that so badly then you must really have something to hide."

Dr. Brenner kept his face calm and collected. He knew Hopper wouldn't back off that easily but whether he wanted to or not, he would. They *would* find the girl. "This isn't your job. You can leave it to us and move on without any interference ever again. And we'll leave you alone."

Hopper glared straight at him, irritation plain all over his face. "So if that's all you needed me to know am I free to leave?"

With a small nod, Brenner drummed his fingers on the desk. "One more thing. If you do happen to be the one to find her, bring her here immediately. We do not need your involvement other than that."

With a look of disgust, Hopper stood up from the chair and stalked past the doctor. Brenner followed him into the hallway and lifted his hand up slightly, gesturing for two of his men to escort Hopper out.

"Keep him under surveillance." He ordered silently to his men as Hopper exited the government building as quickly as he possibly could.

Authors Note: so... this chapter took forever to finish i'm sorry I've been busy with school and I've had family in town so it was hard to find time to work on this chapter. Anyways, if you liked or didn't like it feel free to review and send in some constructive criticism so I know what I can do to make it better.

4. Contact

Eleven had a feeling she was dying. Of course she'd felt like that for the past six months but it was still horrible nonetheless. She was lying down in the upside down version of Mike's basement in the fort that, for some reason, had not been taken down.

After being stuck in the upside down for the past few months, El had no doubt gotten weaker. She was too weak to use her powers most of the time, unless she really strained to use them to try to reach her friends. But she was so drained that she couldn't be sure the connection really went through. And every day she felt worse she wondered how nothing had killed her yet.

So she was basically stuck in this nightmarish version of the real world with these eggos that were always kept in a box in the woods being her only food source.

El was curled up in a ball, shaking really bad. The pain and suffering was so horrible she almost wished that she were back in the lab used as a science experiment again. Tears rolled down her cheeks as her teeth chattered from the cold.

Why didn't anyone come to get her? She wondered. Where was Mike? Did he think she was gone forever? Or did he just not know how to get to her? Eleven shut her eyes, praying she would somehow be transported out of there though she knew she wouldn't.

For a second, all was quiet all was quiet and just as she was about to fall asleep, she heard a growl coming from around her.

The scare seemed to give her a jump start. Her adrenaline was high and she shrieked in terror, holding her knees to her chin as she once again tried to channel her energy into contacting her friends.

"Hey, does anyone else want the last brownie?" Dustin asked as he walked into the garage, holding the chocolate dessert in his hands. The rest of the boys rolled their eyes. They knew Dustin was just asking if he could have it.

"No!" His friends replied all at once as Lucas and Will both got on their bikes.

"Bye, guys." Mike called out as the rest of the party pedaled away.

Once his friends left, Mike wandered back into the house expecting his mom to tell him to go get ready for bed.

"Michael, can you go bring up the plates you boys left in the basement?" Karen asked. She was busy putting dishes away in the kitchen.

"Sure, mom." Mike replied, heading downstairs.

He gathered the plates in his arms, careful not to mess up the way their game was left. As he grabbed Dustin's plate off the table, he regretfully glanced in the direction of the fort again.

Thinking about Eleven sometimes hurt. Yes, that had only known each other for a week but throughout that week he felt he'd made a new friend that he hoped to keep for the rest of his life. But obviously, that hadn't been able to happen.

He didn't want to take down the fort, though. How could be able to get rid of his only reminder she was real? Without it, it was almost like she never existed.

Just as Mike was about to climb back up the steps, a small whimpering sound and static filled the room. He froze in shock. It was so quiet and sudden he couldn't be sure he actually heard it.

The whimpering started again. Back in the upside down, El was in complete hysterics, shaking and crying but trying to be as quiet as she could. The growling had stopped and she still didn't know what it was. Was it the Demogorgan?

No. it couldn't be. The Demogorgan was dead. Something else was out there. But *what?*

Inside the Wheelers' basement, Mike hadn't moved an inch. His eyes scanned the room until he spotted his supercomm, sitting on top of one of the blankets in Eleven's fort. He stared at it for a few seconds

when the whimpering started again.

"El!" Mike hastily placed the plates on top of the table as he ran straight over to the fort. "El, it's Mike. Are you there?" But the only reply he got was static. "El!" He tried again, almost bouncing up and down where he was sitting.

"El!" Mike's voice came from around Eleven as she shot up. "Mike?" She yelled, unsure of where his voice was coming from.

"El, where are you?" Mike's voice surrounded El as she shot to her feet.

"Mike?!" Eleven shrieked again just as the connection closed.

Mike stared at his supercomm for about thirty seconds, trying to figure out what his next move would be.

"Michael?" Karen called down, breaking Mike's focus. "What's going on down there?"

"Nothing!" Her son yelled. He scrambled to his feet, his eyes still on the supercomm.

She was alive. He kept reminding himself while he clomped up the steps with the dishes. After not being able to reach her for a while, he had been sure she was dead. Now the next thing he asked himself was: how would he and his friends find her?

Authors Note: So it's been about two weeks since I last uploaded but i've been super busy with school and shit. And when I did find time to work on this chapter I kept constantly reediting and rewriting it. Anyways, a little reminder that I don't own stranger things but I hope you enjoy! And thank you so much if you reviewed earlier! They really mean a lot to me. If you haven't yet, feel free to review and let me know your thoughts and if you liked it, then subscribe for more. Thanks for reading!